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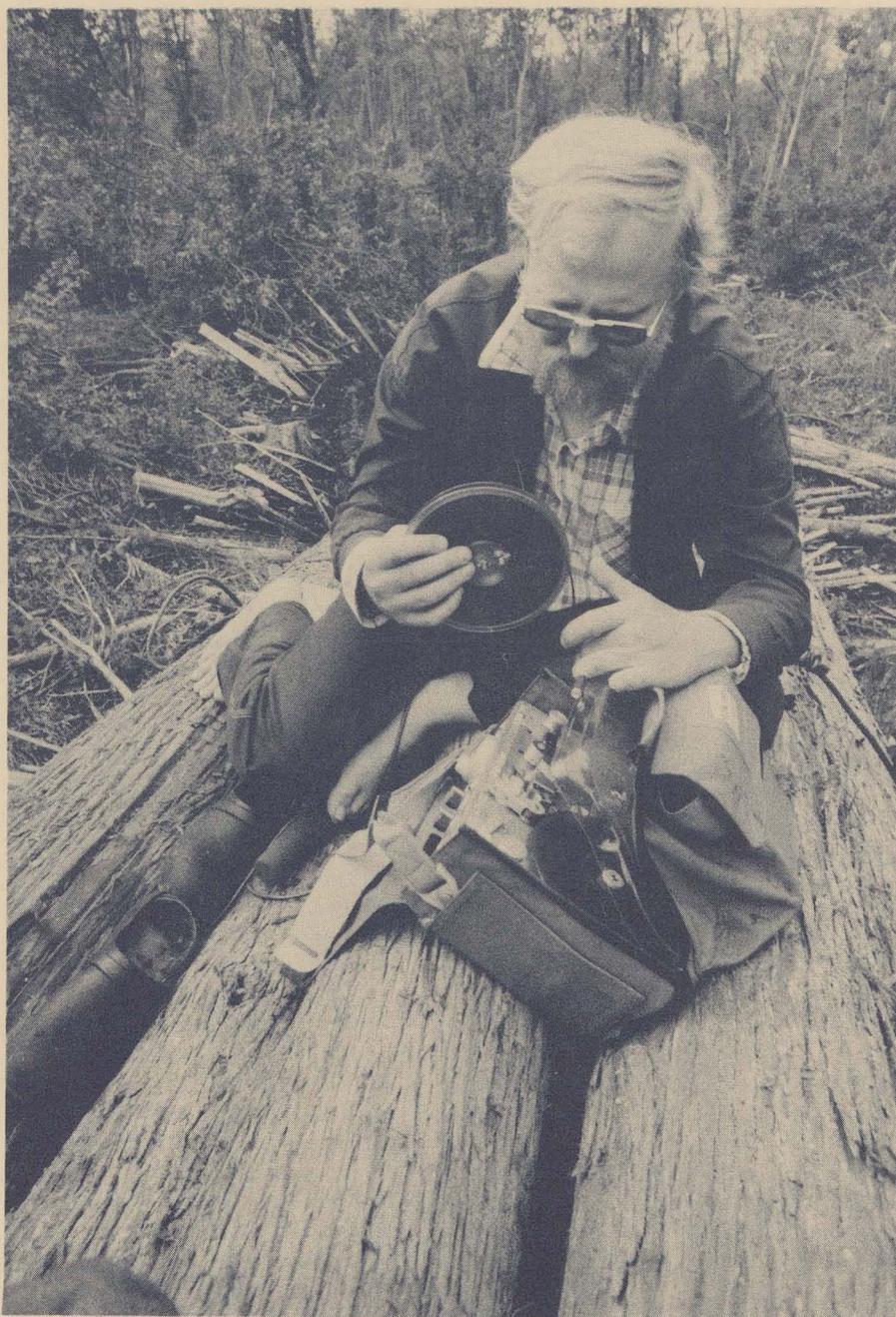
folklife center news

Pinelands AFS Panel

Higher Education Colloquium

Cultural Parks Conference

Winter Workshops



FOLKLIFE CENTER NEWS

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DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

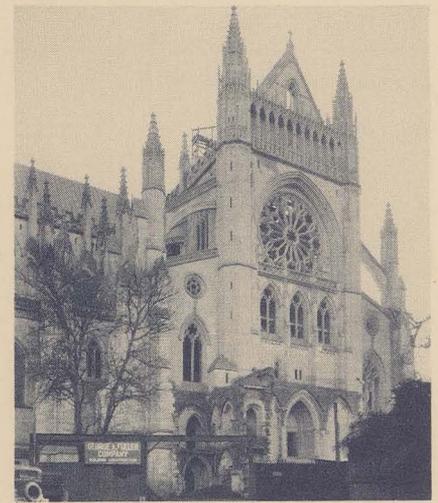
This column originally appeared in slightly different form as "Communities and the Classics: A Folklorist's Perspective," Humanities, Volume 5, No. 2, Summer 1984, a newsletter published by the D.C. Community Humanities Council.

What do the District of Columbia and Paradise Valley, Nevada have in common? Many things, one might suppose, that bind all human beings together, and many more—churches, schools, and the like—that are shared by all Americans. But beyond these

connections at the largest level of generality, most observers would be struck not by the shared culture of the two places, but by the radical differences between them. The District of Columbia is a highly urbanized, mid-Atlantic Seaboard city with a visual environment dominated by government, monuments, row houses, a major river, and trees. Paradise Valley, Nevada is a small Western ranching community surrounded by the mountains and high sagebrush desert of the northern Great Basin. The District is characterized ethnically by a large and varied Afro-American culture, as well as a welter of other cultural groups. Paradise Valley has, for a small community, a surprisingly varied mixture of Euro-American ethnic groups in addition to a few Paiute Indians and Mexican-Americans.

No doubt a subtle analysis of the two places could yield a number of fascinating cultural links. For present purposes it is enough to dwell upon one connecting thread. Both communities are enriched by the artistry and craftsmanship of Italian stonemasons. Folklorist Marjorie Hunt and independent filmmaker Paul Wagner have beautifully evoked, in their recent Smithsonian Institution film *The Stone Carvers*, the work of the carvers at the Washington Cathedral and the nature and spirit of the community of craftsmen out of which the work arises. The American Folklife Center's documentary study of Paradise Valley first called my attention to the handsome stone buildings, built by Northern Italian settlers in the 19th and early 20th century, that adorn the community and the surrounding desert today.

I grant you, they are not exactly the same, either in the basic elements of their craftsmanship or in their visual impact. The splendor of the Washington Cathedral, and the exquisite detail of its stone carving, may seem a far cry from the modest grace of the cowboy bunkhouse in Paradise Valley. Yet each has its beauty appropriate to its location and cultural function. And both are contemporary creations out of a tradition of craftsmanship that stretches from the New World back to Italy, and from the present back

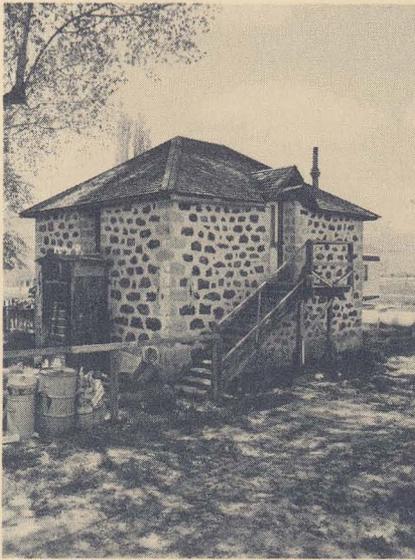


Washington Cathedral, January 14, 1931. (Photo courtesy of Washington Cathedral)

through the Middle Ages to the Roman era.

The stonemasons' work brings to mind a current debate within the professional fields of the humanities. Let me dwell particularly upon two terms around which the debate hovers: *community*, a word that is deeply imbedded in both the terminology and the ideals of folklorists, and *classics*, a term much advocated nowadays as an organizing concept for the contemporary mission of the humanities. As a folklorist I am committed personally to both understanding and encouraging the traditional expressive culture of America's communities, whether those communities be based upon region, ethnicity, religion, occupation, or any combination thereof. As a citizen I am of course particularly interested in and concerned about the communities in my own backyard. The Washington Cathedral, I should mention parenthetically, looms not far from my backyard.

What is puzzling to me is hearing a good many thoughtful people talk about *community* and the *classics* as if they are mutually exclusive opposites. One hears from the National Endowment for the Humanities and academic circles around the country that our nation would be well served by a greater emphasis upon the study of the classics of Western civilization. Nearly everyone seems to agree that more classics would be a good thing; but, going a step farther, some pun-



Granite bunkhouse built by Battiste Recanzone ca. 1900 on the Recanzone Ranch, Paradise Valley, Nevada.

dits propose the new emphasis *instead* of community studies and the like.

Let us begin by examining the word "community" a bit more closely. The Italian-American builders in northern Nevada came from families who emigrated from the Italian Piedmont, south of the Alps, and settled in Nevada during the later 19th century. Not all the families included stonemasons, of course, nor were they from the same immediate community in Italy. Their history and traditions thus create some problems for those who think of a community as a simple, homogeneous entity with a single cultural background.

The stone carvers at the cathedral have included not only Northern but Southern Italians, as well as carvers from other European countries. The special tradition of Italian carving may dominate, but the craft is not the exclusive preserve of any single ethnic group. Finally, it is a community of craftsmen, bound together by their lifelong training and commitment to their craft. They may settle in a particular area, but they may also move around the country or even around the world, following the work. It is not too much to think of them as an international community of artists with a complex but interconnected tradition which provides the rest of us with not only sturdy buildings but visual connecting threads in our civilization.

One of the virtues of the study of folklore and folklife, I have always thought, is that it is both intensive and comparative. A folklorist is interested in small communities and the artistic expressions arising from their shared experiences and values, but equally interested in the continuities through time and space that link and connect communities, not only within a larger culture but cross-culturally. The oral art of a Washington preacher, for example, can be seen in the context of his immediate community: the church he grew up in, the preachers from whom he learned, the church where he now preaches, and the community cultural functions he fulfills. At the same time, because of travel and modern media, as well as the time depth of the oral preaching style in America, a sermon from our Washington pastor's pulpit is part of the same broader tradition that includes the LP recordings of sermons on the Chess label by the Rev. C. L. Franklin of Detroit, early frontier revival preachers, and present-day preachers in Texas or California. And

in widening circles of cultural interconnection, our preacher is part of a larger tradition of rhetoric—including specific stylistic devices—that our civilization traces back to the Greeks and Romans. Thus the Washington preacher is simultaneously a powerful expression of community culture and, if I may call it that, a living practitioner of the *classical tradition* in our civilization.

The same is true of the Italian stonemasons in Washington and Paradise Valley. Their art is supported by an intense ethnic identity and an equally intense but pan-ethnic community of craftsmen in stone. Without those communities their art would not continue to exist. At the same time, as we shift our gaze from the District of Columbia to Nevada, then to Chile and to Italy, we begin to sense the grander dimensions of their participation in shaping our civilization, the geographic breadth and time depth their artistry embraces.

Perhaps we polarize our debates about supporting community culture versus returning to the classics because "the classics" seem so faraway and past, and the living communities so near and present. If there is such a gulf between the two, no doubt we should set about reintroducing one to the other. But from this folklorist's perspective, the differences between "community" and "classical" are not so clear, nor the gulf between them so great, as others may imagine. Our preachers and stone carvers express the contemporary cultural values of our communities; simultaneously, and no less than our libraries, museums, and universities, they are custodians in our midst of the classical values of our civilization.

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“DEEPER IN THE WOODS THAN YOU ARE”

Pinelands Panel at AFS

Five fieldworkers from the Center's Pinelands Folklife Project presented a panel for the 1984 American Folklore Society meeting in San Diego. The panel, entitled “Deeper in the Woods than You Are: Cultural Conservation and the Pinelands National Reserve,” reiterated the twin themes underlying the project research: 1) the interplay of cultural and natural resources in the region; and 2) sense of place.

The researchers for the Pinelands project documented a range of traditional practices, such as boatbuilding, decoy carving, muskrat trapping, music, and storytelling. They also explored the interdependencies between cedar cutting and boatbuilding, environmental attitudes and yardscapes, and the conservation ethos expressed by cranberry growers or traditional firefighters on the one hand, and by deerhunters or birdwatchers on the other.

Regarding pineys, those indigenous, reclusive hunter-gatherers said to people the Pinelands' interior, we encountered two basic attitudes. Some people on the periphery of the Pines thought that we should devote our entire survey to capturing the habits of this vanishing breed on film and tape. Like the antiquarians of the last century, they saw folklore as remnant culture — the “stumps and stubs” of earlier civilization. They were surprised that our study embraced traditions such as home canning, quilting, and local food festivals, or the traditions of newly arrived ethnic communities, that to them were commonplace or recently introduced. These people maintained there is such a thing as a pure piney.

On drawing closer to the center of the Pines, we discovered resentment about the piney stereotype. Looking for a piney was, as fieldworker Bonnie Blair quipped, like looking for a good fishing hole. The panel's title was supplied by Janice Sherwood, whose family arrived in the Pinelands in the

17th century, and who sometimes lays claim to the moniker “piney.” Once, when pressed for a definition of piney, she remarked, “I don't know, a piney's someone who's just a little deeper in the woods than you are.” Our panel is indebted to Janice Sherwood for her wit, which supplied us with a way of saying that, regarding the problem of cultural conservation — the protection of intangible cultural resources — we are not out of the woods yet.

Puerto Ricans are not landowners or long-time residents of the Pinelands, but as farm laborers they play, like the Italians before them, an important part in the region's economy. In her survey of Puerto Rican communities, Bonnie Blair discovered that, for Puerto Ricans in South Jersey, Puerto Rico is in many ways closer than Philadelphia, and that Puerto Ricans maintain a sense of who they are partly by settling near their old neighbors from Puerto Rico. Her paper, entitled “All the People Here Are from One Exact Town,” described the role of the Woodbine community as a regional model for keeping the old ways from Puerto Rico alive in a new place. In it she asked the questions, “What is the connection between economic prosperity and the health of a culture?” and “Can Pinelands legislation uphold local economies in a way that favors traditional values?”

One strategy often characterizing folklife research is the use of “text” as a metaphor for any form that enables us to “read” culture. During her exploration of festivals in South Jersey Sue Samuelson discovered that festivals can be read for important information about the struggle for control over the environment. At events like apple festivals, pumpkin-picking parties, and crab-ins, people are not only bragging, in a sense, about the place and its provisions, but also interpreting its past through a plethora of old-time crafts, costumes, and

resurrected technologies. Such events may recommend directions for the future as well. The crab-in, for example, sponsors a scholarship to enable a local person to study marine ecology, in the hope that such a person, familiar with the lifestyle and values of baymen, could influence some of the coastal regulations now imposed by outsiders. Her panel presentation, “Festivity and Identity in New Jersey's Pinelands,” raised questions concerning local affiliation with the term “Pinelands.” People use or eschew the term for different reasons. For some people it signifies the intrusion of state and federal agencies in local affairs. For others, like the Pinelands Cultural Society and the Pinelands Garden Club, it represents the saving of certain cultural and natural resources from destruction. She also touched on the paradox implicit in festivals that celebrate the abundance of the harvest, while extolling the traditional virtue of making a little go a long way.

Samuelson's use of festival “texts” as a port of entry into local world views was paralleled by Jens Lund's use of narratives garnered from South Jersey outdoorsmen. In his paper “Danger and Delight: South Jersey Environmental Experience Narratives” he described the environmental attitudes of the men who work the woods, bays, and marshes of South Jersey. While they have none of the training or vocabulary of formal environmentalists, they are culturally authorized, through their experience with the elements, to name and hold forth on them. Lund reflected upon environmentalism as a 20th-century ideology that sometimes fails to recognize the authority of people whose lives are intimately bound to environments. That bond is illuminated and strengthened in stories like the “close-call” narratives that Lund related in his paper. Captain Lou Peterson's enthusiasm for an environment that challenges him to survive is



Contenders for the title of La Reina or Queen of the Puerto Rican community for 1983-84 line up in St. Joseph's Church Hall, Hammonton, N.J. (Photo by Joseph Czarnecki)

evident in his conclusion to one story about a close call on Delaware Bay: "There's somethin' fun about bein' scared to death. That's the reason race-car drivers get a kick out of racin' . . ." Their understanding and appreciation of environmental subtleties is indeed one of South Jersey's richest cultural resources. Salt-hay farmer George Campbell of Eldora prefers mosquitoes to DDT, claiming that before they banned DDT, the mosquito commission had devastated life on the marshes:

Everything was, you know, they had wiped it out and I was pleasantly surprised how quick the meadows has come back since they quit using it. The fiddler crabs is back strong now. The meadows just came back to life again. The dragonflies is back. They was completely gone and Mother Nature had kicked back and they're all back again and it's good to see 'em. . . . I was glad to see it because that's half the enjoyment of working outside is going down in the meadow and seein' the osprey and the eagle takin' the fish. . . . [Interview, Jens Lund, November 7, 1983]

Eugene Hunn, the project's

ethnobiologist, suggested that we should pay attention to the region's ethno-ecology—the ways in which people name and describe their habitats as systems. Though he could not participate on the panel, the theme of ethno-ecology was present in Lund's paper, and in the paper by Mal O'Connor entitled "Time, Work, and Technology: A Multi-Generational Approach to Family Business in the Pinelands." One of the questions addressed in his paper was, "What is the difference between the conservation ethic of cranberry growers and woodsmen and the conservation ethic of environmentalists?" Both groups are faced with the same problem—how to make the resources at hand go as far as they possibly can. Growers and cedar cutters have to organize their time in terms of daily, seasonal, and generational cycles. In developing their technologies and renewing their resources they have to be forward-thinking. They have to compete in markets outside of the region. Unlike those for whom the Pinelands serve as recreational space, the families who work there do not assign play to a separate place and time. Rather, playfulness with the environment and

its resources comes with the mastery of them, achieved through working with them for generations and having become acclimated to their various rhythms. There are several ironies involved in the relationship of Pinelands family businesses to their surroundings. One is that traditions survive because they can change with the times, not because they are preserved like pickles in a jar. If family businesses are to survive as one of the region's cultural resources, they have to be financially feasible enterprises capable of competing in the national marketplace, which means, among other things, continuing a long-standing tradition of technological inventiveness.

Enclosure was the unifying framework for Elaine Thatcher's remarks, which considered yardscapes as cultural texts, and which also closed the panel. In the common yardscape many of the themes informing the interactions of people and nature surface and are formalized. With their eclectic and recycled blending of historic artifacts and native and non-native plants, yardscapes are not only personal statements that contribute to the

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PINELANDS AFS PANEL

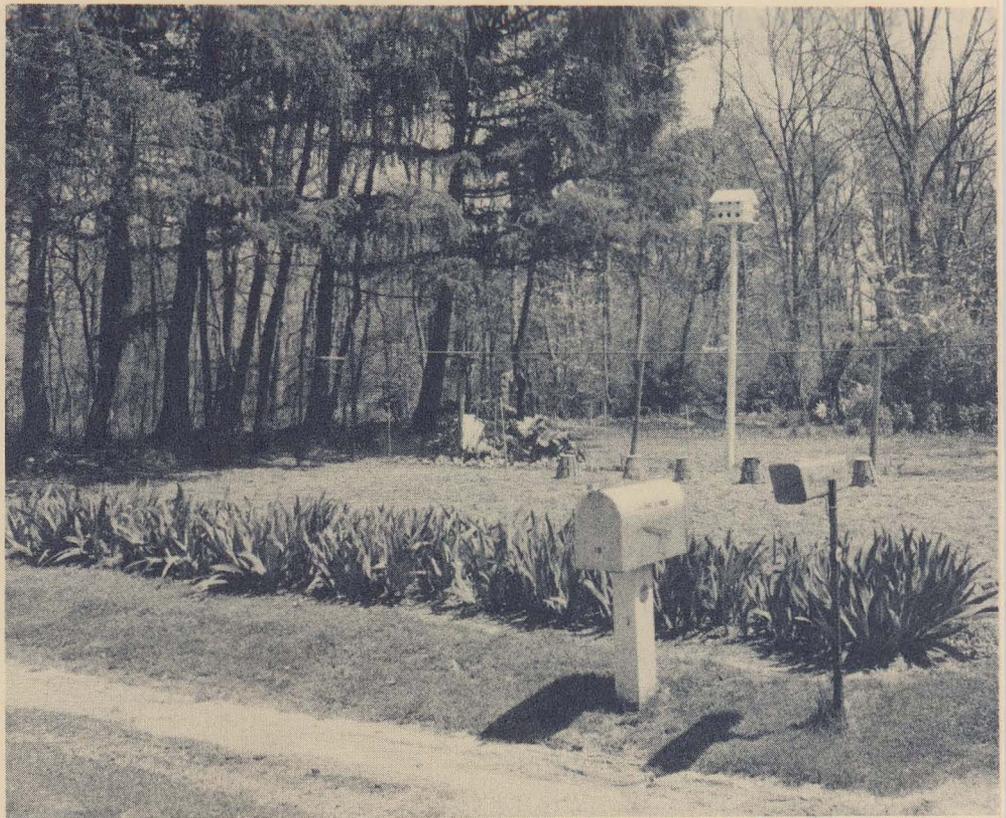
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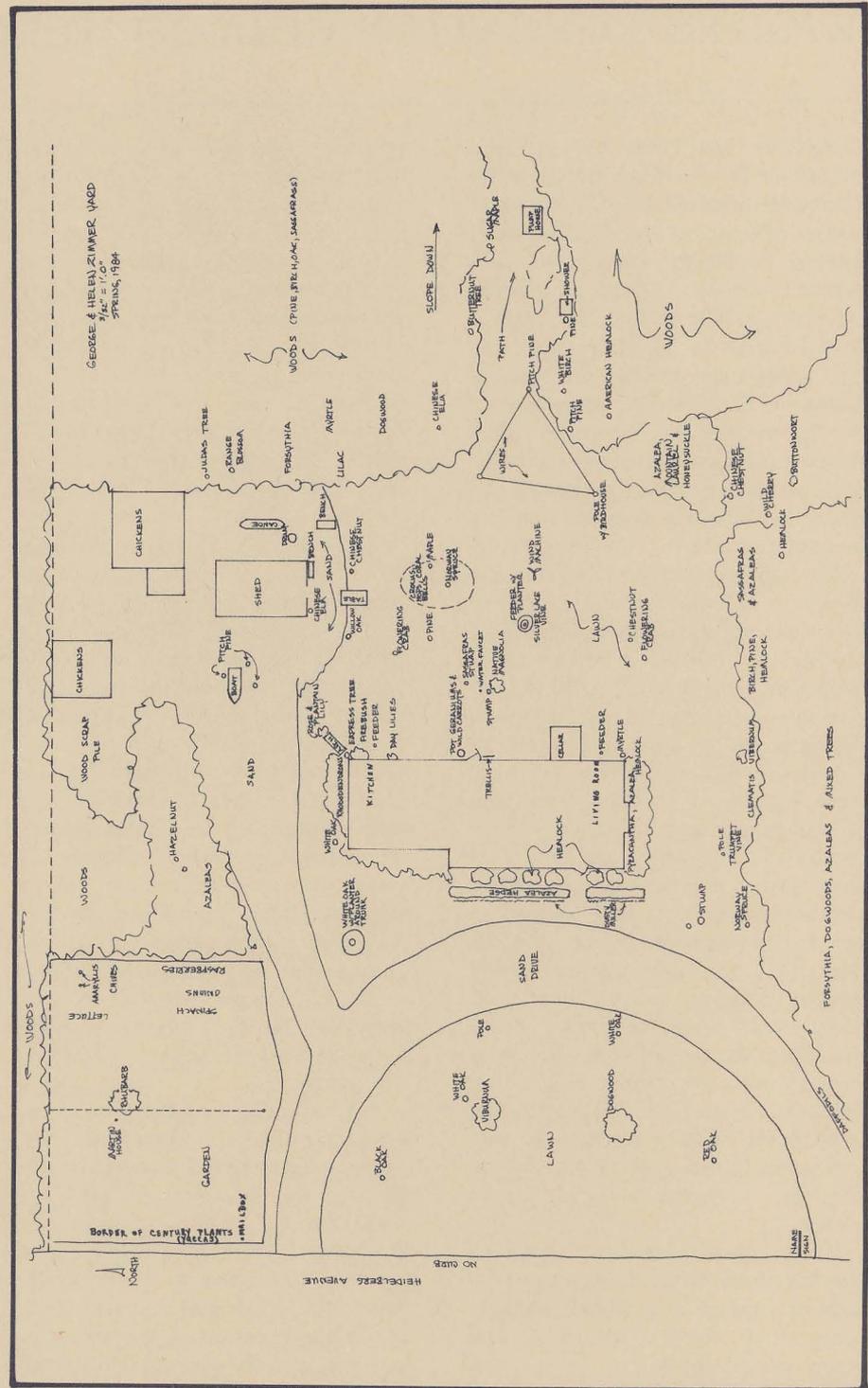
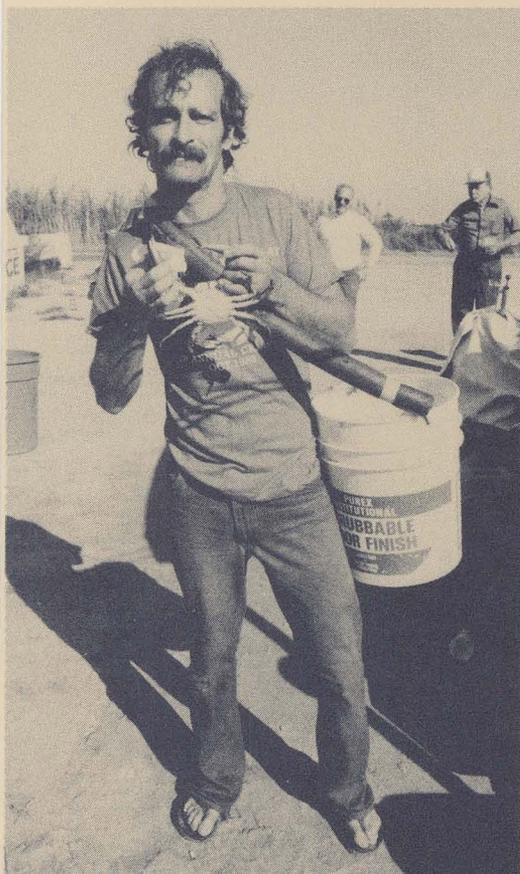
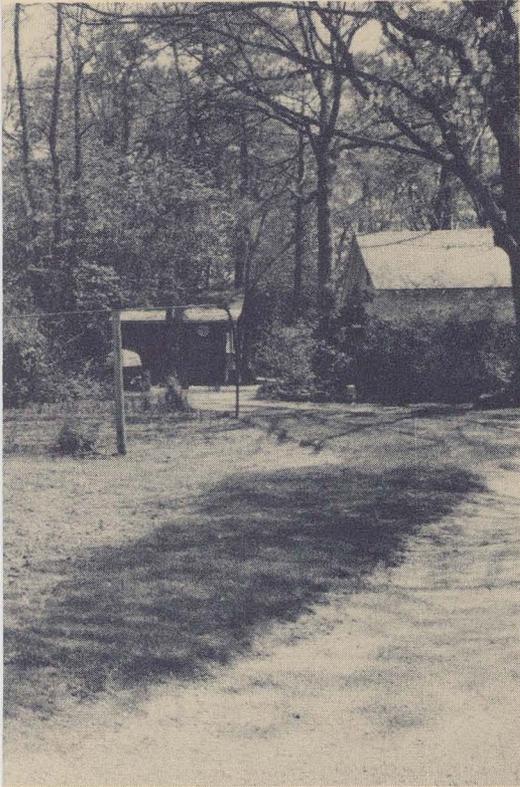
character of a region, but displays of local attitudes about nature, community, and history. In her paper "Personal Places and Public Spaces: Yardscapes in the Pinelands National Reserve" Thatcher proposed a methodology for describing and studying yardscapes. Yards could be rated on a scale of one to ten for their degree of integration with the environment, with ten reflecting a high degree of integration, and one reflecting a high degree of separation. The borders of a highly integrated yard, for example, would not be as sharply defined as the boundaries of a yard designed to keep the woods at bay. The decision to use native or non-native materials for defining spaces within the borders may correlate with environmental attitudes, noted Thatcher. Most yardscapes occupy the middle ground. Certain spaces, like vegetable gardens and formal gardens, are clearly defined and protected from encroachment, while other spaces are used to cultivate interaction with wildlife. Well-known strategies for observing wildlife include birdfeeders and cleared spaces within view of the common areas in the home.

Opportunities to observe wildlife are in turn annexed to the region's storytelling impulse. Eugene Hunn compared one bird feeder to a morality play, having witnessed, through the eyes of its keeper, a cast of spartan chickadees, proletarian sparrows, lazy cardinals, and aggressive bluejays. This observation of the natural world gives rise to myriad stories, through which the animal world continues to mirror the human one, as it has done for thousands of years.

Yardscapes and other ways of framing the encounter with nature discussed during the panel—community living, local festivals, close-call stories, and family businesses—are thus cultural resources, valuable but easily overlooked. Cultural conservation efforts must therefore be directed not only to the stumps and stubs but to the living forest.

—Mary Hufford





Fieldworkers for the Center's Pinelands Folklife Project documented the cultural life of the region by a variety of means. Elaine Thatcher photographed the yardscape of George and Helen Zimmer from Egg Harbor, N.J. (above left), while standing on Heidelberg Avenue. Thatcher also made the scaled drawing of the Zimmer's yard to the right. Mal O'Connor interviewed and recorded Silas Little (below left), a Pinelands silviculturist, on the ecology of Atlantic white cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*); the photograph is by Carl Fleischhauer. Project photographer Joseph Czarnecki photographed a participant at MacHoeh's Crab-in, Tuckerton, N.J., displaying the distinguishing features of a male crab.

HIGHER EDUCATION COLLOQUIUM

Folklore has been a recognized discipline in the United States for nearly one hundred years. Universities began offering advanced degrees in folklore during the 1940s, and there are currently eleven graduate folklore programs in North America. Yet prior to the recent colloquium on folklife and university education held at the Library of Congress—cosponsored by the American Folklife Center and the American Folklore Society—the heads of the various graduate programs had never met officially to discuss matters of mutual concern.

On September 13 and 14, 1984 the directors of eight graduate folklore programs gathered at the Library of Congress, together with other folklorists teaching in English or anthropology departments or working in public-sector positions. To get the discussion under way participants were invited to describe their own working situation within their university or cultural agency, and to present their views about the current status of the field of folklore with regard to higher education. It soon became evident that the participants shared several concerns. Among those most often raised were the image of the discipline, the lack of skills and training shared in common among folklorists, the educational preparation needed for folklore students to find jobs in the future, and the relationship between academia and the public sector.

Several participants were anxious that the public sees folklore as a trivial subject studied in a trivial manner. They were further disturbed that many people think that anyone can write or talk about folklore, without any training in the subject. In addition, they said, numerous jobs—both within academia and in the public and private sectors—that should properly be filled by folklorists are given to individuals without specialized folklore training.

The amount of core material incor-

porated in graduate folklore courses and the degree to which folklorists share skills and training were other issues that concerned the colloquium participants. Some felt the current lack of core material within the discipline may contribute to the public's confusion about what constitutes folklore, making it appear that the study of folklore has more to do with what a particular professor decides to call folklore than with a defined body of knowledge or an agreed-upon approach.

The questions of where jobs are to be found, whether students are adequately prepared to compete for them, and what the relationship of academia to the public sector should be were raised and reiterated throughout the meeting. The general sentiment was that more potential jobs for folklorists are being generated today in the public sector than in academia; but folklore graduate training may not be adequately preparing students for positions in the public sector. Several participants felt that folklore programs should provide students with a better introduction to public-sector folklore work. Others worried that the professors are not themselves sufficiently aware of what public-sector folklorists are doing.

Having described their programs and voiced their concerns, the participants then offered practical suggestions on how to attack the problems and how the Folklife Center and American Folklore Society might be of assistance in doing so. Probably the most often expressed suggestion was that a summer training program or internship in public-sector folklore work, similar to the Summer Folklore Institute previously conducted at Indiana University, be created. Another suggestion was that a questionnaire survey be conducted to determine and monitor changes in folklore courses at colleges and universities. Several participants felt that the folklore programs across the country should make more

of an effort to provide a standard core of material, and that a consortium of schools could be established to allow students to do course work at different universities.

At the conclusion of the meeting Center director Alan Jabbour remarked that several of the recommendations and goals cited by the participants apply to the Center. He noted the strong desire of many for a summer training program, and remarked that the Center has an interest in conducting a questionnaire survey of the current status of folklife and higher education. He then expressed his hope that such meetings would become regular events within the professional field. Bruce Jackson, President of the American Folklore Society, closed the colloquium by saying that he was very much in favor of another meeting: "We are at once too small and too large to allow this kind of silence to continue."

Attending the meeting were Richard Bauman from the University of Texas at Austin; David D. Buchan of Memorial University of Newfoundland; Robert Georges from the University of California at Los Angeles; Kenneth Goldstein of the University of Pennsylvania; Lynwood Montell from Western Kentucky University; Daniel Patterson from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Edson Richmond of Indiana University; Ronald Baker from Indiana State University, Terre Haute; Charles Camp from the Maryland Arts Council; Bruce Jackson from the State University of New York at Buffalo and President of the American Folklore Society; Charles Joyner from the University of South Carolina, Coastal Carolina College; Marsha McDowell of The Museum at Michigan State University; Charles Perdue of the University of Virginia; Ellen Stekert from the University of Minnesota; and Roger Welsch of the University of Nebraska.

CULTURAL PARKS CONFERENCE



Jesse Walter Fewkes in front of the Far View Ruins at Mesa Verde, Colorado in 1918. (Photo courtesy of the National Park Service)

On September 16, 1984 Alan Jabbour joined some 160 participants from around the world for the First World Conference on Cultural Parks. The five-day conference, organized by the National Park Service, was held at Mesa Verde National Park to call attention to its designation as a World Heritage Site by Unesco's World Heritage Committee.

A high mesa some 15 miles long in southwest Colorado, Mesa Verde has commanded archeological interest since the late 19th century because of ruins of approximately 4,000 Anasazi cliff dwellings, camp sites, and pithouses located there. The Anasazi, American Indians who inhabited the area between the 5th and 14th century A.D., appear to have been ancestral kin to the contemporary Pueblo cultures of the Rio Grande basin, the Hopi of eastern Arizona, and the Zuni of western New Mexico. The name "Anasazi" is Navajo and means "The Ancient Ones."

Although the conference had two other themes—technology and preservation in cultural parks, and touristic use of parks—it was the third theme—the relationship of native cultures to cultural park planning, development, and management—which generated the most interest. Jabbour himself spoke on "Cultural Conservation and the Pinelands National Reserve." His talk was based on data gathered during the 1983 Pinelands Folklife Project and organized into a slide presentation by Center staff member Mary Hufford. Later in the conference, staff member Carl Fleischhauer presented a workshop for participants on effective means for photographic and sound documentation.

The concern for the topic of native cultures and cultural parks was deep enough to be reflected in many of the conference's resolutions and recommendations. The first conference resolution points to the importance of

recognizing "the diverse past and present lifeways" historically associated with parks and resolves to include "participants from indigenous and other local peoples" in future conferences. The second resolution states, "Local peoples historically associated with cultural parks, reserves or programs should be involved, regularly and intimately, in the establishment, planning, implementation and managerial decisions of those units or programs. In particular, the needs and views of local or native peoples must be taken fully into account in the development and use of the resources."

Plans are now under way to publish the proceedings from the conference, which should provide useful materials for all who are interested in the relationship of living cultural traditions to issues of management in public parks.

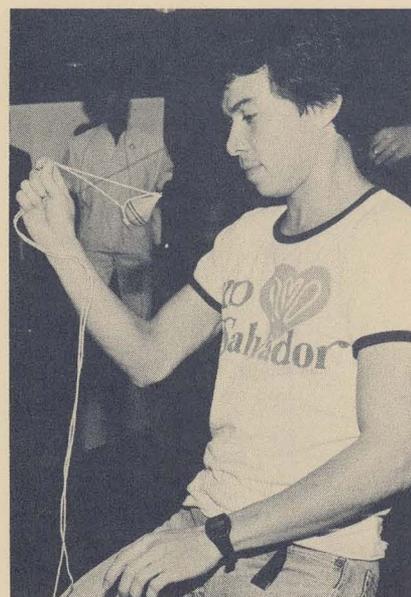
STAFF NEWS

Eleanor Sreb, Executive Assistant to Folklife Center director Alan Jabbour and Secretary to the Center's Board of Trustees, will retire from government service on January 3, 1985. She was one of the Center's early staff members, joining in the fall of 1978. Prior to that, as Special Assistant to Elizabeth Hamer Kegan, Assistant Librarian of Congress for American and Library Studies, she aided in the creation of the Center in 1976. She then worked on special assignment to the Center in various functions during the first two years of its existence. She has been an employee of the Library of Congress since 1963. Her tireless energy and organizational skills will be missed by Board members and staff alike.

Folklife specialist Carl Fleischhauer married Paula Johnson in late July 1984. Johnson, formerly Administrative Secretary at the Folklife Center, left that position in late 1978 to acquire an M.A. in folklore at the University of Texas at Austin. She is currently developing special exhibits for the Calvert Marine Museum in Solomons, Maryland.

Folklife specialist Elena Bradunas married Audrius S. Aglinskas at the end of September 1984. The groom is a medical doctor working in Hawaii.

WINTER WORKSHOPS



Salvadoran students now living in Washington presented top-spinning games, "rapping" interchanges, and stories for the Center's bilingual workshop *Tops/Trompos* on October 25. Saúl Cruz (L), José Salmerón, Manuel Vásquez, and Luis Argueta aim their tops at one lying in a chalked circle; Cruz attends the Multicultural Career Intern Program and the remaining students are from Lincoln Junior High. Students from Stevens Elementary School watch Melvin Meheux hold a spinning top (below left). Amilcar Díaz strikes another top with his own, held in a cord sling (below right).



Sirkka Singleton (above left) demonstrates the folding of Joulutorttu, prune-filled stars from Finland, while her daughter and granddaughter look on during the Dough Ornaments and Festive Cookies workshop on November 25. Filomena Agnelli-Lesansky discusses Christmas traditions among Italians in Brooklyn, where she grew up (above right). Phyllis Frucht and her daughter (below left) mix Bimuelos, treats prepared for Hanukkah in Sephardic Jewish households. Vilma Janke-Grace offers the audience a closer look at her Turrón de Doña Pepa, a traditional Peruvian Christmas delicacy.



New Jersey cranberry grower William Haines, Jr. demonstrates the use of traditional cranberrying tools during the Center's December 13 lecture and demonstration on Cranberry Culture. Further winter workshop photographs can be found on pages 10-11.

Front cover: *Pinelands Folklife Project fieldworker Jens Lund changing tape reels during his documentation of George Brewer's lumbering operation in Great Cedar Swamp, near Dennisville, N.J. (Photo by Joseph Czarnecki)*

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